



April 23, 2004

## Two are sentenced for crack cocaine trafficking

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### Charles Isler and Bilal Rashid helped run a “green light” crack house on Burnside Street in Providence

A federal judge today sentenced **Charles Isler** to 262 months in prison and **Bilal Abdul Rashid**, to 210 months imprisonment for their roles in the operation of a crack house at 178 Burnside Street, Providence. The house had a green light on its back porch, which detectives believe signaled that the dealers were open for business.

The Office of the United States Attorney announced the sentence, which U.S. District Court Judge Mary M. Lisi imposed in U.S. District Court, Providence. Another defendant in the crack house conspiracy, **Charles Brown**, is detained awaiting sentencing, which is scheduled for May 20. He faces a non-parolable life sentence.

Isler, 33, of 48 Glenham Street, who has three prior drug-trafficking convictions and seven felony convictions overall, was sentenced as a career offender.

In February, a jury found Isler, Brown 32, of 178 Burnside Street, and Rashid, 28, of 138 Linwood Avenue, guilty of conspiracy to distribute cocaine base (crack). During the trial, Assistant U.S. Attorney Adi Goldstein presented evidence that the Providence Police Narcotics, Firearms and Organized Crime Bureau began investigating activities at 178 Burnside Street last year after receiving complaints about suspected drug trafficking.

In June 2003, Detective Scott Partridge conducted surveillance on the house and observed that the rear entrance to the first floor apartment had a rectangular slot in the door that

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could be used for drug transactions. The entrance was a double door, fortified with a steel gate. The house was equipped with surveillance cameras. There were a green lamp and a red lamp in the back hallway.

“The first floor of 178 Burnside was dedicated to the sole purpose of selling crack cocaine,” Assistant U.S. Attorney Goldstein said to the jury at the start of the trial.

On June 3, Narcotics Bureau detectives executed a search warrant for the first floor apartment. To gain entrance, they had to ram the outside door and pry open an inner door. Brown, Isler, and Rashid were inside and, after a struggle, were taken into custody.

Detectives found on a kitchen table a brown paper bag containing 142 grams of crack cocaine. Next to the drugs were various items used in the packaging and sale of crack cocaine, including small plastic bags, a digital scale, a razor, and baking soda. Also on the table was a split screen video monitor displaying four camera views of the perimeter of the house. In an overflowing toilet in the bathroom, detectives found 26 baggies containing about 6 grams of crack.

In a car outside the apartment, detectives found a Cheese Puffs container containing about five grams of crack cocaine. A detective had earlier observed Brown arrive in the car and take a package out of the Cheese Puffs container.

The **Providence Police Narcotics, Firearms and Organized Crime Bureau** and the **Drug Enforcement Administration** investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Goldstein is prosecuting it.